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The Last SPEECH OF Mr. Oliver Plunket, Titular PRIMATE of IRELAND,

Who was Executed at *Tyburn*, on *Friday* the 1*st*. of this instant *July*, 1681.

Written by his own Hand.

I Have some few days past abided my Tryal at the *Kings Bench*, and now very soon I must hold up my Hand at the King of Kings Bench, and appear before a Judge who cannot be deceived by False Witnesses, or Corruped Allegations; *For he knoweth the secrets of Hearts*: Neither can he deceive any, or give an Unjust Sentence, or be Misled by respects of persons; *He being all goodness, and a most just Judge, will infallibly decree an eternal Reward for all good works, and Condign punishment for the smalest Transgression against his Commandments*. Which being a most certain and undoubted Truth, it would be a wicked Act, and contrary to my perpetual welfare, that *I* should now by declaring any thing contrary to the Truth, commit a detestable sin, for which within a very short time I must receive Sentence of Everlasting Damnation: after which their is no Reprieve or hope of Pardon. *I* will therefore Confess the Truth, without any Equivoation, and make use of the words according to their accustomed signification; assuring you moreover, that I am of that certain perswasion, that no Power, not only upon Earth, but also in Heaven, can dispence with me, or give me leave to make a False Protestation: And I protest upon the word of a Dying man, and as I hope for Salvation at the *Hands* of the Supream Judge, that I will declare the Naked truth with all Candor and *Sincerity*: And that my affairs may be the better known to all the World,

'Tis to be observed, that I have been *Accused* in *Ireland* of Treason and *Præmunire*, and that there I was Arraigned and brought to my Tryal: but the Prosecutors (men of Flagitious and Infamous Lives) perceiving that *I* had Records and Witnesses who would Evidently convince them, and clearly shew my Innocency and their wickedness; They voluntarily absented themselves, and came to this City, to procure that I should be brought hither to my Tryal (where the Crimes objected were not committed) where the Jury did not know me; or the Qualities of my *Accusers*, and were not informed of several other Circumstances conducing to a Fair Tryal. Here, after six *Months* close Imprisonment (or there abouts) I was brought to the Bar the third of *May*, and Arraigned for a Crime, for which I was before Arraigned in *Ireland*. A strange Resolution, a rare Fact, of which you will hardly find a Precedent these five hundred years past: But whereas my Witnesses and Records were in *Ireland*, the

Lord Chief Justice gave me five weeks time to get them brought hither: But by reason of the uncertainty of the Seas, of VVind and VVeather, and of the difficulty of getting Copies of Records, and bringing many VVitnesses from several Counties in *Ireland*, and for many other Impediments (of which *Affidavit* was made) could not at the end of the five weeks get the Records and VVitnesses brought hither; I therefore begged for twelve days more, that I might be in a readiness for my Tryal, which the Lord Chief Justice denyed, and so I was brought to my Tryal, and exposed, as it were, with my *Hands* Tyed, to those Mercilesse Perjurors, who did aim at my Life, by Accusing me of these following points.

First *That I have sent Letters by one* Nial O Neale *(who was my Page) to Monsieur* Baldeschi, *the* Pope's *Secretary; to the* Bishop *of* Aix, *and to* Principe Colonna, *that they might Solicit Forraign Powers to Invade* Ireland; *and also to have sent Letters to Cardinal* Bullion *to the same effect.*

Secondly, *To have imployed Captain* Con O Neale *to the* French *King for Succour.*

Thirdly, *To have Levied and Exacted Monies from the Clergy of* Ireland *to bring in the* French, *and to maintain seventy thousand men.*

Fourthly, *To have had in a readiness seventy thousand men, and Lists made of them, and to have given* Directions *to one* Frier Duffy, *to make a List of* 250 *men in the* Parish *of* Foghart *in the County of* Lowth.

Fifthly, *To have Surrounded all the* Ports *and Harbours of* Ireland, *and to have fixed upon* Carlingford *as a fit Harbour for the* Frenches *Landing.*

Sixthly, *To have had several Councils and Meetings, where there was Monie alloted for introducing the* French.

Finally, *that a Meeting in the County of* Monaghan, *some* 10 *or* 12 *years past, where there were* 300 *Gentlemen of three several Counties, to wit* Monaghan, Cavan *and* Armagh; *whom* I *did exhort to take* Arms *to recover their* Estates.

To the first I answer, that *Nial O Neale* was never my Servant or Page, and that I never sent Letter or Letters by him to *Monsieur Baldeschi*, or the Bishop of *Aix*, or to *Principe Colonna*. And I say, that the *English* Translation of that pretended Letter produced by the Frier *Macmoyer* is a meer invention of his, and never Penned by me, or its Original either in *English*, *Latin*, *Italian*, or any other Language. I affirm moreover, that I never wrote Letter or Letters to Cardinal *Bullion*, or any of the *French* Kings Ministers; neither did any who was in that Court either speak to me, or write to me directlie or indirectlie, of anie Plot or Conspiracy against my King or Countrie. Farther, I *Vow* that I never sent Agent or Agents to *Rome*, or to anie other Court, about anie Civil or Temporal Affairs: And 'tis well known, (for it is a Precept publicklie Printed) that Clergie-men (living in Countries where the Government is not of *Roman Catholicks*) are commanded by *Rome*, not to write to *Rome* concerning any Civil or Temporal Affairs. And I do aver, that I never received Letter or Letters from the Pope, or from any other of his Ministers making the least mention of any such matters: So that the Friers *Macmoyer* and *Duffy* Swore most Falslie, as to such Letter or Letters, Agent or Agents.

To the second, I say that I never employed Capt. *Con O Neal* to the *French King*, or to any of his Ministers; and that I never wrote to him, or received Letters from him; and that I never saw him but once, nor ever spoke to him to the best of my remembrance ten words, and as for his being in *Charlemount*, or *Dungannon*, I never saw him in them Towns, or knew of his being in those places: So that as to *Con O Neale*, Fryer *Mack Moyer's* Depositions are most false.

To the third, I say, that I never Levyed any Monie for a Plot or Conspiracy, for bringing in *Spaniards or French*, neither did I ever receive any upon that account, from *Priests or* Fryers, as *Priest Mac-Clave*, and Fryer *Duffy* most untruly asserted. I assure you, that I never received from any *Clergy-man* in *Ireland*, but what was due to me by ancient custom for my maintenance, and what my Predecessors these hundred years past were wont to receive, nay I received less than manie of them. And if all what the *Catholick Clergy of Ireland* get in the year, were put in one Purse,

Purſe, it would ſignify little or nothing to introduce the *French*, or to raiſe an Army of ſeventy thouſand Men, which I had Inliſted, and ready, as *Fryer Mac Mayor* moſt falſely deponed; neither is it leſs untrue what *Fryer Duffy* atteſted, *viz.* That I directed him to make a Liſt of 250 Men in the Pariſh of *Loghart*, in the County of *Lowth*.

To the fifth, I anſwer, that I never ſurrounded all the Forts or Harbours of *Ireland*, and that I was never at *Cork*, *Kinſale*, *Bantry*, *Youghal*, *Dungarvan* or *Knockfergus* and theſe 36 years paſt I was not at *Limerick*, *Duncanon* or *Wexford*. As for *Carlingford*, I was never in it but once, and ſtaid not in it above half an hour; Neither did I conſider the Fort or Haven; Neither had I it in my thoughts or Imagination to fix upon it, or upon any other Fort or Haven, for Landing of *French* or *Spaniards*; and whilſt I was at *Carlingford* (by meer chance, paſſing that way) *Fryer Duffy* was not in my Company, as he moſt falſly Swore.

To the ſixth, I ſay that I was never at any Meeting or Counſel, where there was mention made of alloting or collecting of Moneys, for a Plot or Conſpiracy; and 'tis well known, that the *Catholick Clergy* of *Ireland*, who have neither *Lands* nor Revenues, and hardly are able to keep decent Cloaths upon their Backs, and Life and Soul together, can raiſe no conſiderable ſum, nay cannot ſpare as much as would maintain half a Regiment.

To the ſeventh, *I* anſwer, that I was never at any meeting of 300 Gentlemen in the County of *Monaghan*, or of any Gentlemen of the three Counties of *Monaghan*, *Armagh*, and *Cavan*, nor of one County, nor of one Barony: and that I never exhorted Gentleman or Gentlemen either there, or in any other part of *Ireland*, to take Arms for the recovering their Eſtates; And 'tis well known that there are not, even in all the Province of *Ulſter*, 300 *Iriſh Roman Catholicks*, who had Eſtates, or loſt Eſtates by the late Rebellion; And as 'tis well known, all my thoughts and endeavours were for the quiet of my Country, and eſpecially of that Province.

Now to be brief, As I hope for Salvation, I never ſent Letter nor Letters, Agent or Agents, to *Pope*, *King*, *Prince*, or *Prelate*, concerning any Plot or Conſpiracy againſt my King or Country: I never raiſed ſum or ſums of *Money*, great or ſmall, to maintain Souldier or Souldiers all the dayes of my life; I never knew or heard, (neither did it come to my thoughts or imagination,) that the *French* were to land at *Carlingford*; and I believe there is none who ſaw *Ireland* even in a Map, but will think it a meer Romance; I never knew of any Plotters or Conſpirators in *Ireland*, but ſuch as were Notorious and Proclaimed (commonly called *Tories*,) whom I did endeavour to ſuppreſs. And as I hope for Salvation, I alwayes have been, and am intirely innocent of the Treaſon laid to my Charge, and of any other whatſoever.

And tho' I be not guilty of the Crimes of which I am accuſed, yet I believe none came ever to this Place who is in ſuch a condition as I am; for if I ſhould even acknowledge (which in conſcience *I* cannot do, becauſe I ſhould bely my ſelf) the chief Crimes laid to my charge, no wiſe man that knows *Ireland* would believe me. If I ſhould confeſs that I was able to raiſe 70000 men in the diſtricts of which I had care, to wit, in *Ulſter*, nay even in all *Ireland*, and to have levyed and exacted moneys from the *Roman* Clergy for their maintenance, and to have prepared *Carlingford* for the *Frenches* Landing, all would but laugh at me, it being well known, that all the Revenues of *Ireland*, both Spiritual and Temporal, poſſeſſed by His *Majeſtie's* Subjects, are ſcarce able to raiſe and maintain an Army of 70000 men. If I will deny all thoſe Crimes, (as *I* did, and do) yet it may be that ſome, who are not acquainted with the Affairs of *Ireland*, will not believe that my denial is grounded upon Truth, tho' I aſſert it with my laſt breath. I dare venture farther, and affirm, that if theſe points of 70000 men, *&c.* had been Sworn before any Proteſtant Jury in *Ireland*, and had been even acknowledged by me at the Bar, they would not believe me, no more than if it had been depoſed, and confeſſed by me, That I had *flown in the Air* from *Dublin* to *Holy-head*.

You see therefore what a condition I am in, and you have heard what Protestations I have made of innocency, and I hope you will believe the words of a dying man; And that you may be the more induced to give me credit, I assure you, that a great Peer sent me notice, *That he would save my life, if I would accuse others:* but I answered, *That I never knew of any Conspirators in* Ireland, *but such* (as I said before) *as were publickly known Outlaws*; *and that, to save my life, I would not falsly accuse any, nor prejudice my own Soul.* Quid prodest homini, &c. *To take away any mans life, or goods wrongfully, ill becometh any Christian, especially a man of my Calling, being a Clergy-man of the Catholick Church, and also an unworthy Prelate, which I do openlie confess.* Neither will I deny to have exercised in *Ireland* the Functions of a Catholick Prelate, as long as there was any Connivance or Toleration; and by Preaching and Teaching, and Statutes, to have endeavoured to bring the Clergy (of which I had a care) to a due comportment, according to their Calling: and tho thereby *I* did but my duty, yet some who would not amend had a prejudice for me, and especially my Accusers, to whom I did endeavour to do good, I mean the Clergy-men, (as for the four Lay-men who appeared against me, *viz.* *Florence Mac Mayor*, the 2 *Neals* and *Hanlon*, I was never acquainted with them:) but you see how I am required, and how by false Oaths they brought me to this untimely death, which wicked act being a defect of Persons, ought not to reflect upon the Order of S. *Francis*, or upon the *Roman* Catholick Clergy. It being well known, that there was a *Judas* among the 12 Apostles, and a wicked man called *Nicholas* amongst the seven Diacons; And even, as one of the said Diacons, to wit holy *Stephen*, did pray for those who stoned him to death: so do I, for those who with *Perjuries* spill my Innocent Bloud, saying as St. *Stephen* did, *O Lord lay not this sin to them.* I do heartily forgive them, and also the Judges, who (by denying me sufficient time to bring my Records and Witnesses from *Ireland*) did expose my life to evident danger. I do also forgive all those who had a hand in bringing me from *Ireland* to be tryed here, where it was morally impossible for me to have a fair Tryal. I do finallie forgive all who did concur, directlie or indirectlie, to take away my life, and I ask forgivenness of all those whom I ever offended by thought, word or deed.

I beseech the All-powerful, That his Divine Majestie grant our King, Queen, and the Duke of *York*, and all the Royal Familie, Health, long Life, and all Prosperitie in this world, and in the next Everlasting felicitie.

Now that I have shewed sufficientlie (as I think) how innocent I am of anie Plot or Conspiracie: I would I were able, with the like Truth, to clear my self of high Crimes committed against the Divine Majesties Commandments (often transgressed by me) for which *I* am sorrie with all my heart: and if *I* should, or could live a thousand Years, I have a firm resolution, and a strong purpose, by your Grace (O my God) never to offend you; and *I* beseech your Divine Majestie, by the merits of Christ, and by the Intercession of his Blessed Mother and all the holie Angels and Saints, to forgive me my sins, and to grant my Soul Eternal Rest. *Miserere mei Deus*, &c. *Parce animæ*, &c. *In manus tuas*, &c.

Postscript.

TO the final satisfaction of all Persons, that have the Charity to believe the Words of a dying Man; I again declare before God, as I hope for Salvation, what is contained in this Paper, is the plain and naked truth, without any Equivocation, Mental Reservation, or secret Evasion whatsoever; taking the words in their usual sense and meaning, as Protestants *do, when they discourse with all candour and sincerity. To all which I have here subscribed my Hand,*

OLIVER PLUNKET.

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